

Ready the Dragons

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Summary: Through mostly Astrid's eyes, the teens get ready to ride the dragon training dragons to go and save the adults from the fiery fury of the Queen Dragon. Some canon, but I added some of my own creative scenes to link them all.

Ready the Dragons

****_Soli Deo __gloria_****

****DISCLAIMER:** I do NOT own How To Train Your Dragon. I've been in a moody-mood lately, so this story might be depressing. This is where Hiccup is dragged off to discuss a certain dragon with a furious father and here's what Astrid and everyone else does. I filled in some of the scenes the movie didn't have.
>

Against the stone, cold and heartless walls with chains forming a spiderweb overhead, Astrid tried to calm her rapidly beating heart. Breath nearly knocked out of her, she barely noticed her small hand brushing the blonde bangs from her eyes. Her heavy breathing was starting to slow after several minutes of non-stop hurried air gulping.

Her quick grey eyes started to scan the arena known as the Kill Ring. Only a few minutes ago all the bleachers of the stadium had been filled to bursting with cheering and blood thirsty dragon hunting Vikings. Roaring loudly for the pour of fresh Nightmare blood, they had created quite the noise in the stands.

Chief Stoick the Vast had taken a seat on his throne, ready to watch the battle of his son versus the Monstrous Nightmare. There was across from him in the crowded stood four Viking teens. Snotlout, cheering as loud as he could, Tuffnut and Ruffnut, for once in their lives not fighting each other, and Fishlegs, a rather nerdy Viking, who even though hadn't defeated a dragon the whole time that they

were training, was ready as anyone for the battle.

Astrid herself had been down in the entrance to the huge auditorium with the gladiator in question. Hiccup had his back to her and was as nervous as a jumpy cat. His thin, bony fingers tapped themselves rhythmically on his mother's breastplate-turned-helmet. His thick breathing echoed slightly in the small, contained room. Astrid found him to be a bit adorable looking.

She slipped down closer to him and brushed back her raggedy hair. Quietly sucking in a deep breath, she couldn't help but blush at the thought of last night. How she had kissed him, the worst Viking in the history of Berk, on the cheek. Even though she knew that it had felt weird to both of them, she didn't regret it at all. Now there was just the thought of having to speak to him before complete and utter awkwardness filled the rock walls.

Astrid summoned her courage and said in a voice that even she didn't recognize as her own, "Be careful with that dragon."

To her relief, he replied, "It's not the dragon I'm worried about." She slowly nodded in response. The crowd of Vikings that were all so filled with tradition would not like the idea that the Chief's son had befriended the unholy offspring of lightening and death. Especially the Chief. Stoick was a terribly proud man, and having Hiccup being the clumsy messmaker had just further hurt it. Now that he was a village hero, she knew that he would be crushed to find out that his son was a scam, a lie. She winced when she thought about it.

She honestly knew not of what he could do in this situation. He could betray his entire tribe, or himself. She worriedly asked, "What are you going to do?"

"Put an end to this. I have to try." The teen slowly turned to the blonde and said, no, pleaded, "Astrid, if something goes wrong, just make sure that they don't find Toothless."

Astrid could have smiled at the way that even though he was going to somehow reveal to the entire tribe about how friendly dragons were and even how he could possibly die at the fire of the Monstrous Nightmare, he was only thinking about the safety of his best friend. That was loyalty.

She gave him a slight nod and asked him in the same worried voice she had before, "I will. Just promise me that it won't go wrong." Her eyes pleaded for something to reassure her. The grim frown he had been wearing had twisted so that he could say something to her, but before he could, Gobber had come and urged him into the ring. The iron gate slowly closed down, making a grinding noise as it slipped to the ground with a slight thud.

The next two minutes had been the scariest in the Hofferson girl's fifteen years of living on the Earth. The Monstrous Nightmare had been set loose, fire and anger emitting off of its red hot body. Hiccup, shield and dagger in hand, dropped them both. He yelled loudly at the astonished Berkians and assured them that dragons weren't as bad as they seemed. One sentence of his speech stuck in Astrid's head, echoing inside her skull like a thousand tiny voices, "I'm not one of them." He had said it so calmly and firmly, and yet,

because of it, all Hell broke loose.

Stoick had instantly stood up in rage and yelled loudly, banging his large hammer against the chains, "I SAID STOP THE FIGHT!"

The Monstrous Nightmare had gone berserk. It had been rather subdued by Hiccup's calm demeanor, but when it was startled by the thud of the hammer, he had no mercy. Hiccup had been chased all over the large ring. Astrid remembered being shocked and horrified as his plan backfired on him. She instantly scanned the room, looking for anything to use. She found an axe and used it to pry the gate open.

Stoick immediately ran to the entrance, red beard flashing in anger, to try to save his son. Hiccup might have died trapped under the claws of the Nightmare unless a certain familiar bolt of blue light hadn't broke through the strong chains making up the Kill Ring's roof and pounced on the red dragon. Smoke billowed out of the shot and filled the arena, and only when it cleared did Astrid and everyone else see something that shocked them all.

Toothless was wrestling the Monstrous Nightmare, ripping it away from tearing up the boy. The two dug at each other with their razor sharp claws, flashing their deadly fangs. Toothless had gained the upper hand and threw the Nightmare off. He backed away toward Hiccup, creating a barrier as he barred his teeth at anyone who would touch him. The boy immediately urged the dragon to leave, but instead it stayed next to him. She had bit her lip and drawn blood for dozens of Vikings, at seeing the beasts calmed, yelled furiously and leaped into the ring.

Astrid watched, completely numb and clueless, as Stoick grabbed an axe and ran at the devil. Her heart leaped into her throat as she tried to yell for him to stop. Hiccup had had better luck trying to take control of his voice for he screamed at his father, "HE WON'T HURT YOU!"

The dragon, intent on protecting his human, ran at the weapon-bearing chief with anger fueled speed. Despite Hiccup's insistent pleading, the two forces clashed into each other. Wrestling each other down, Toothless easily had gotten the upper hand on top of Stoick, and a blue fume floated from his mouth as Astrid gulped in shock. The Night Fury was about to ignite the Chief's head.

Breathing heavily, she could only watch as the blue gas grew brighter and brighter. Hiccup, also lacking breath, used what was left in his tank to yell at the top of his lungs, "NO!"

Astrid held her breath for a few seconds before Toothless closed his mouth and looked back at Hiccup in concern.

With Toothless calmed, the Vikings immediately wrestled him off of the chief. Astrid quickly shook her head to clear it as best as she could, and looked at Hiccup. He was ready to take on all those men by himself to get to his best friend, and she knew that they wouldn't take too kindly to that, especially since he was now an official traitor.

As quickly as she could, she raced to the boy and wrapped her arms around him. It wasn't a pleasant hug that she would have otherwise

would have liked to give him, but rather a restraint. She planted her booted feet against the ground firmly while he tried to struggle out of her reach. Her usually rock hard heart melted for him when he pleaded, "NO! Please, just don't hurt him.

"Please don't hurt him."

Astrid watched Stoick with hurt eyes as the man brushed himself off. Someone handed him an axe, Astrid gulped, so that he could finish off his son's only friend right in front of his eyes. Her heart pleaded for the Chief to have mercy on the magnificent beast. He must have somehow heard her, for he only scowled angrily and said, "Put it with the others."

Astrid's thin arms went limp in relief. The boy in her grip also relaxed, but only for a slight moment. Stoick stomped over to her and instantly grabbed the top of Hiccup's fur vest. Astrid cringed and backed away as Hiccup squirmed in his father's grasp. The man didn't seem to notice for his face was too clouded over with anger. He grunted and the sea of Vikings immediately parted. Stoick, silent as a rock, marched through with his teen yelling, "Dad! Please, you have to understand!"

Astrid tried to catch her breath as all the other Vikings soon parted, muttering among themselves of the boy's treachery. The ones putting away Toothless managed to get the whimpering dragon into one of the dragon's cages. Astrid watched silently as the log was made into position to go down on the locking mechanism when Spitelout came bounding toward them. Even when covered in grit and sweat, he remained poised and alert as he yelled at the workers, "Quick, we're takin' the devil wit us to find ta nest. 'Pparently, only a dragon can find ta nest. Bar 'im down and bring 'im oot."

Astrid realized that Hiccup must have let it slip about that fact about the nest and the dragons. Astrid quickly ran her tongue over her dry lips, an awful habit she had when she was nervous, and watched with silence, save for the breath emitting from her body, as the Vikings looked at each other with surprised expressions. They easily un-caged the animal and led Toothless out of the ring, biting the metal chains as they yanked on them. Soon, the entire ring was empty, save for the Viking girl.

Finally, after catching her breath and reliving the horrific events in her mind, Astrid straightened and sighed. The ships' horns filled her ears as she realized that they were about to set sail. The noise of several ships highering their anchors and sailing off into the distance rang through the air as she walked slowly out of the ring. She then started to run to a better view of the ships along the edge of the cliff.

She skidded to a stop near the edge and peered over. Her eyes instantly caught sight of a deep black figure, bound by wood of oak, made by men. Right beside him was the unmistakeable figure of Stoick the Vast. She could identify his red beard anywhere.

Astrid watched as they passed through the foggy mist and out of sight. Sighing silently to herself, she looked all around her and noticed a single figure up on the cliff off of Mead Hall. The figure was small, slight and depressed, meaning it could only be one person. Hiccup.

Astrid set a determined frown on her face and without a thought, raced up the wooden staircase. Her heart pumped faster as her legs kept up with it. Her head swam with thoughts as her feet slammed against the wooden boards. What could she say to him? She was never the reassuring type, never the comforting person who could give a good pep talk. She sighed to herself as she quickly scaled the stairs. She'd try her best.

Once on the top of the cliff, Astrid slowly stopped and looked at him. Even though she could only see him from the back, she could tell he was slumping over and sounded terribly depressed. Biting her fingernail, she thought over how was the best way to do this. Well, she knew Hiccup, a little bit, anyway, and she knew that he probably wouldn't react to kind words. Not that she was good with encouraging words anyway. Astrid decided to settle on making him think. He thought a lot, and he might come up with a plan.

She slowly approached him until there was only about two feet separating them. Astrid fixed her eyes on the sea where the ships had plowed through.

"It's a mess." Astrid started off slowly. Her words bit through the air and Hiccup didn't respond. She summoned whatever she had to use to talk and continued, "You must feel horrible. You've lost everything, your tribe, your father, your best friend."

"Thank you for summing that up," his words, dripping with sarcasm and hurt and defeat, did little to disturb her. She had rather expected that. She inwardly sighed when she noticed that they weren't exchanging eye contact. How was she supposed to make him do something when they couldn't share eye contact?

Astrid set her jaw and struggled in her mind of what to say next. To her amass relief, his voice broke through the tension, tired and defeated, "Why couldn't I have killed that dragon when I found him in the woods? It would have been better for everyone."

Astrid slightly smirked to herself as she added brightly, "Yep, the rest of us would have done it." When he didn't add anything, she cautiously asked, "So why didn't you?"

He gave a slight shrug and turned away ashamedly as he whispered, "I don't know. I couldn't."

Astrid could have let out a raspberry at him. He, Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the 111, (WHY did she know his full name?), one who was usually actually quite the talkative and thoughtful person, answered with, "I don't know. I couldn't."

"That's NOT an answer," she pointed out matter-of-factly. Her words apparently made it into his skull for he turned back to her, albeit irritably, and asked, annoyed, "Why is this so important to you all of a sudden?"

Astrid lost no time in replying, "Because I want to remember what you say, right now!"

He had been breathing irregularly and now his breathing intensified when he turned, a bit angry at her, not that she really minded, and

retorted, "Oh for the love ofâ€"! I was a COWARD! I was WEAK! I wouldn't kill a dragon!"

A fire of pride ignited in her stomach. She had gotten an answer, a real answer. Astrid immediately pointed out to him eagerly, "You said 'wouldn't' that time!"

He was visibly ticked off by her and looked at her disgustedly, that she would care about one word, and thundered defensively, "Whatever! I, I wouldn't! Three hundred years and I'm the first Viking who wouldn't kill a dragon!" Astrid looked straight into his green eyes, and he looked right back. While she was filled with a mixture of annoyance with him acting like this when his best friend was in danger, she was feeling sympathy for him. He was filled with hurt. Without another word, he turned away.

Astrid continued with a quiet, "First to ride one, though." She was filled with relief when his shoulders somehow didn't seem to slump so much, and his back straightened, as if the words had hit him hard enough to do that. She then tried to poke and break the bubble of insecurity that surrounded him with a single word.

"So?"

His attention was instantly caught. He slowly shook his head around slightly in his usual Hiccup fashion and murmured, "I wouldn't kill him because he looked as frightened as I was." He slowly turned to face the Viking girl and added, "I looked at him, and I saw myself."

Astrid let this information process in her brain for a second. Did he really see himself as like that of a Night Fury? In her mind, she saw a Night Fury as a strong and mighty beast, able to do great things. She couldn't help but think that he was right, for to her, she thought he was like that too.

She slowly turned to the sea and remarked, "I bet he's really frightened now." When the teen didn't respond, she added, "What are you going to do about it?"

He slightly shook his head and shrugged his shoulders as he said dejectedly, "Probably something stupid."

For once since that flight last night, Astrid let a smile cross her face, an excited one at that. She eagerly prompted him with, "Good, but you've already done that."

A slight happy smirk replaced the smile when she noted the realization flooding his face. He held up a finger in excitement as his thin legs tapped against the boards. His voice was filled with excitement as he mused, "Then something crazy." Once his words were out, he dashed down the wooden bridge.

"That's more like it!" Astrid smiled to herself. She instantly picked up her long legs and bounded after him. Pounding against the walkway, she quickly caught up with him. Pumping her arms to keep up with him, she asked loudly, "What's the plan?"

She could faintly feel his speedy breathing, him and her being only a couple of feet apart on the narrow bridge, as he answered, "Gather

the other trainees and meet me at the Kill Ring." Astrid quickly nodded. When the two came to a fork, she raced down one of the roads and him the other. Her feet pounded against the beaten route to where she was certain the other teens would be located.

* * *

><p>The crowds had parted from the smelly place known as Berk's docks. Sea gulls circled over head, diving toward the bare, blue ocean to retrieve a fish for its meal. Snotlout found the hunger of a particular bird to be easily taken advantage of. He bent back and threw a stone at the bird. The gull easily dodged the stone, letting it drop into the water. Snotlout wrinkled his nose and grabbed another stone and threw it again at the bird without even trying to hit it. He just needed to get the betrayal out of his mind.<p>

Tuffnut and Ruffnut had taken a seat on a large load of wood. Each Thorston teen was so utterly shocked, horrified, and yet, in true Tuffnut and Ruffnut fashion, somewhat in awe how their classmate, heir of the chief of Berk, had befriended a Night Fury. And he didn't tell them! They were so stuck in a stupor that neither had the energy to pick a fight with their twin.

Fishlegs shook and trembled on his stool. His speedy breathing, his shaking knees and horrified face easily showed how Hiccup's treachery had stirred him. He had once been Hiccup's friend, even his best friend. When they were younger, of course. The best of buds, going everywhere together. Their friendship had been so tight it now devastated the large nerd on how easily it had fallen apart. The Chief's wife, Vallhallarama, had died, and Stoick had taken the idea to hide Hiccup in the house as much as possible. Fishlegs, separated from his friend, eventually started to hang with the other kids. He never looked back.

Now, with Stoick gone hunting for the nest and Hiccup out and about, winning at the dragon training classes, the boys had become friends again. Not nearly the friendship they had had, but a companionship with the twins and Snotlout. When Hiccup had thrown his dagger, shield and his mother's helmet, his heart had sunk. The teen he had come to know was a _fraud. _Someone he had respected for handling the dragons in such a cunning way had turned on him, and his entire tribe.

He was filled with resentment. Fidgeting with a piece of wood, he burst out, "How could he betray us like this!"

"Believe me, I hate it WAY more than you do. He's RELATED to me," Snotlout pointed out, annoyed. He drew back his thick arm and let loose another rock.

Tuffnut slouched on his wood so that he was practically laying down on it. He made a pillow out of his gangly arms and added to the conversation, "He went and befriended a dragon, a Night Fury, for Pete's sake!"

"And he didn't let us ride it," Ruffnut added sulkily. She propped up her head on her clenched fist and brushed one of her bulby braids out of her face with her other rough palm.

"I know!" Tuffnut instantly sat up and waved his hands around wildly in emphasis. "I mean, that's so mean of him!"

"Are you seriously just mad over the fact that he wouldn't let you ride his stupid dragon?" Fishlegs scowled. Tuffnut turned to face the stone-faced nerd with a, "No, I have more dignity than THAT!"

"Since when do you have ANY dignity?" Ruffnut challenged. The smirk that had grown on her face was instantly knocked off when her brother immediately threw himself on her. Wrestling her down, the two began to roll around the docks.

"Yeah, well, if I see his face again, I'llâ€" Snotlout started to complain, but before he could throw out his next cannonball, he heard a slight pounding on the wood beside him. He turned to see Astrid hopping down the last few steps of the staircase. He instantly donned his 'charismatic' and 'charming' personality when the blonde approached him. Snotlout threw the rock he had been clenching in his fist behind him, which earned him a loud, "OW! IDIOT!" from Ruffnut.

"Well, hello, Astrid. You look incredibly wonderful today," Snotlout smiled brightly. Astrid smiled a smile back at him, to his amass surprise. Astrid never smiled at him, NEVER! He must be doing something right!

"Thanks, Snotlout, but hey, guys, gather around," Astrid instructed. Ruffnut and Tuffnut immediately untangled themselves from each other and ran to her side, still elbowing each other any chance they had.

"Coming, Fish?" Astrid called. The broken teen sat head bowed on his stool. He gave a slight shrug at her voice and focused his attention on the rock at his toes.

"Legs, come on!" Snotlout called after him. "Astrid's got a plan!"

"What are you even doing?" Tuffnut wondered.

"I am trying to IGNORE you!" Fishlegs informed them, annoyed at their ignorance.

"Fishlegs! Come on," Astrid called after him. When he didn't reply, she sighed softly and added, "We need you." She was somewhat shocked to realize that the boy had the same expression as Hiccup had when she had told him something profound, something that he had to think about before he answered.

She and the other teens watched Fishlegs slowly place his hands on his knees, and he eased up off of the stool. Patting his helmet into place, he stole a glance at the four that were waiting for them. He sighed and turned away from them for a moment as he hid his head in his hands. Astrid was barely able to make out the words, "I can't believe I'm doing this." He sighed and turned back to them and slowly plodded to them. With another sigh, he folded his arms and asked, "What's the plan?"

Astrid sighed as she brushed back her blonde tresses and answered, "I don't know what the plan is, but Hiccup does." Her explanation

immediately drew out some sighing and shaking of heads.

"Ah, come on, guys," she folded her arms. Turning to Snotlout, she flashed him a sincere smile and genuinely asked, "Please, Snotlout?"

She wasn't trying at all, but apparently her smile had a magical effect on the Chief's nephew, for for an answer he just eagerly nodded and replied, "Of course, Astrid!" His answer only made her smile grow broader, and she next turned to the twins.

"Guys, Hiccup might let you ride a dragon," she gently teased them. She was not stupid; she could hear their complaints as she had walked down. Tuffnut nodded with agreement and folded his arms smugly.

"I'm going to be the best dragon rider ever. It's my destiny," he smirked.

"That's what you said about the dragon training, dope-head!" his sister immediately pointed out.

Astrid rolled her eyes at the twins and turned to Fishlegs. "What do you say?"

Fishlegs opened and closed his mouth several times, trying to see what words would come out. When none came, he sighed and merely nodded his head. Astrid nodded and with a hand on her hip, she used the other to point behind them. "Let's get going!"

"Right!" Tuffnut and Ruffnut immediately yelled. The two started to war-whoop as they bounded up the stairs ahead of the other three. In their haste, they bonked into each other, causing their fire of fighting to ignite, and they immediately started to bump each other intentionally.

The other three followed them in a slightly more orderly fashion until they reached the top to the main road of the island. Astrid grabbed Tuffnut and Ruffnut's hands with her own and drew them closer to the other three. Once she had gotten their attention, she shushed them. Their helmets nodded with their heads, causing the horns on their hats to collide with Astrid's head. She immediately groaned and pushed them away.

They all ran quietly to the entrance to the Kill Ring. Astrid tossed back her hair and looked about. The Kill Ring was bare except for a few supplies gathered in a box that Hiccup must have somehow acquired, and Hiccup. Standing fully, he looked more confident than he had when she had left him.

Astrid turned to see Fishlegs with a scowl on his face. He folded his arms and stated, still slightly mad at the other nerdy teen, "If you want to get eaten, I suggest you go with the Gronckle."

The smile that Hiccup had been wearing immediately vanished. Astrid gave Fishlegs a snarl for his talk and whispered, "_Legs._"

Luckily, Hiccup didn't have to dwell long on the fact that his fellow friend has basically told him how to commit suicide because Tuffnut immediately approached him. The usually fun loving teen had a dead serious face on as he said slowly and dramatically, "You were wise to

seek help from the world's most deadly weapon." When Hiccup started to back away, his face displaying how he had no idea what the twin had meant, Tuffnut let out a little sigh and added, "It's me."

Snotlout rolled his eyes at the Thorston twin and shoved him aside. Fueled by the power and the awesomeness of Astrid's smile, he was in a mood to make her more happy, even if it involved his treacherous cousin, who, he had to admit, was kinda cool to be able to befriend the deadliest of dragons. He pumped his fists excitedly and yelled, "I, LOVE THIS PLAN!"

"Uh..." was all that Hiccup could muster. He honestly had no idea that his cousin of all people would be so excited to help him. The enthusiastic relative was then pushed away and replaced with a smiling Ruffnut Thorston.

"You're crazy!" she pointed out. She drew nearer to him, making him slowly back away in panic. His face turned to that of being frightened when she added huskily, "I like that." Astrid immediately shook her head at her statement. No, she was not feeling jealousy, was she? She couldn't, she only started to like the boy last night. Oh, Astrid liked a boy! Before she could think of anymore thoughts that would plague her mind long after this, she shoved Ruffnut from her place. To her relief, Hiccup let out a sigh of relief of not having Ruffnut looking at him like that.

The blonde smiled at him and placed her hands on her hips. It made her feel empowered.

"So, what is the plan?" she wondered. She felt a warm tingle grow in her as he replied with a smile and, "We're going to go save the adults, and Toothless."

"Not trying to be a downer here, but they took all the boats," Fishlegs pointed out. The scowl on his face stayed in place when Hiccup raised an eyebrow at his attitude. The short teen then continued with, "No, we're not taking boats. We're going to ride dragons."

This statement stirred the four flightless teens. Astrid's smile grew wider at the thought of riding with Hiccup again, the others, eh, not so much.

The twins were more than vaguely ecstatic. They both started to jump up and down like excited children and they bumped fists and whooped. Snotlout, usually the fearless leader of the gang, had his face twisted into that of a mixture of horror and scaredy-cat-ness. Fishlegs lowered his death scowl and he asked, "Wait, you mean, ride one?"

"That WAS the idea," Hiccup explained. "You see, at the nestâ€œ"

"Wait, when did you go to the nest?" Fishlegs immediately asked.

"Well, Astrid and I went riding on Toothless last night, and he led us to it. Only a dragon can find the nest, so my dad took Toothless to guide them," Hiccup imparted. He let out a low sigh that only

Astrid could hear. He barely made audible, "We have to get him back." Astrid's smile faded as she carefully reached out a hand and patted him slightly on the back.

"Wait, you and Astrid went riding," Tuffnut started.

"On a Night Fury," Ruffnut added.

"Together?" Tuffnut wondered. The two twins turned to each other with evil grins as they both squealed, "OH! Romance AND a dragon!"

Hiccup and Astrid exchanged unamused looks at their figuring. Snotlout gulped when Hiccup ran a thin hand through his rough hair and growled, "Yeah, sure, we did. ANYWAY...as I was saying, when we went to the nest, there was this huge dragon thereâ€"

"Was it bigger than Ruffnut's head?" Tuffnut wondered. His sarcastic remark earned him a smack on the head that nearly plowed him down, curtsy of his sister.

"Yes, Tuffnut, it was bigger than your sister's head. It was bigger than the Kill Ring," Hiccup said lowly. His description of it started to wear down the enthusiastic smiles of the twins, causing an uneasy air to fill the ring as he continued, "It's bigger than the square, maybe even bigger than the entire village."

"The entire village?" Fishlegs's eyes went wide and his palms started to emit a large amount of greasy sweat.

"I'm not sure, but it could be," Hiccup replied. "That's all I really have now; I'll come up with the rest of the plan on the way."

"Wait, you don't have a plan yet?" Snotlout shouted, horrified at the notion of riding dragons and then facing the biggest dragon Berk's ever seen and not having a plan to fall back on.

"Look, Snot," Hiccup straightened up. "We don't have a lot of time. We need to go before the dragon wipes out nearly our entire village!"

Astrid nodded in agreement, adding, "He's right." Turning to the auburn-haired boy, she asked, completely confident in him, "What now?" Hiccup smiled and held up his finger as a signal for her to wait. The five teens watched, excited and nervous, as Hiccup ran to the cage enclosing the dragon that had nearly ended his life earlier. He pulled on the metal chain, lifting the wood log from the metal ties. Tying the chain around a stone sticking out of the walls, the teen inhaled and slowly opened the doors.

The blondes and a very nervous Snotlout watched as a blood red body slowly emerged out of the stall. Hiccup held out his hands non-threateningly as he quietly soothed it with small words. He slowly started to back away from it, beckoning for it to follow him. The dragon's eyes relaxed as it slowly eased its way out of the cage.

Whilst the other teens were pretty stoked to see Hiccup control the dragon, which was reduced to a calm beast, Snotlout saw non other than the animal that had nearly brought his cousin to his demise. Fidgeting nervously, he searched about for anything to use in self

defense. Spying a broken spear, he stooped and grabbed it. He was about to straighten when he heard Astrid whisper, "Nu-ah." He let go of the spear only to have Hiccup grab his left hand. He anxiously watched as his cousin replaced his small hand on the dragon's snout with his own chubby one.

Snotlout quickly started to panic, "Wait! What are you. .
."

"Relax," Hiccup quickly reassured him. "It's okay . . . it's okay."

Hiccup slowly let go of his hand and smiled at Snotlout. Snotlout let out a huge sigh of relief. The dragon wasn't attacking him at all! It actually seemed quite docile. He let out a nervous laugh, finding it a bit funny how he was scared of it. Hiccup nodded slightly and ran from his side. The teen, without Hiccup's calm and skillful presence, instantly panicked, "Wait, where are you going?" The beast suddenly seemed dangerous again.

Hiccup smiled at the five as he reached the large box on the other end of the ring. Rustling around for a second, he straightened and held out a loop of rough rope. "You'll need something to help you hold on." He gave a slight nod toward the dragons saved for training that were coming out of their cages.

"OH! I get a Zippleback head!" Tuffnut yelled. He instantly raced to the dragon, shoving Ruffnut aside. The girl immediately balled up her hands and yelled, "No! I am, lump head!"

"Lump braid!"

"Guys, guys, careful. You'll scare them," Hiccup warned. Tuffnut instantly skidded to a halt. Ruffnut had been running after him, and she collided with him, knocking off his helmet. He scowled and turned to knock some sense into his sister's fat noggin when she pointed, "Look!"

The twins' breathing slowed to that of a shocked awe as the Zippleback's two heads slowly lowered themselves down to their height. They watched the two heads intently as the Zippleback carefully sniffed them for any sign of danger.

Tuffnut gulped slightly, and shakily held out one of his hands. Ruffnut followed suit until both of their outstretched hands wavered near their noses. The two heads sniffed them eagerly. They turned to the other and had a little chat between each other consisting of chirps and rattles. After a brief discussion that had Ruffnut and Tuffnut shaking in their boots, the left head nodded to the right. The right head slowly stooped to Ruffnut's hand. Cooing softly, it slid under her hand. Ruffnut gasped slightly at the movement, and slowly started to stroke its head. The left did the same with Tuffnut, leaving both twins looking at each other in awe.

Hiccup smiled at the communication and tossed the rope to Astrid. The blonde instantly caught it with one small hand, and with practiced smoothness, tossed it to Fishlegs. The boy instantly yelped as the coils fell into his open arms, and he clutched it tightly.

Astrid walked up to Hiccup's side. The teen had stooped back down to

the box of various supplies, most of which consisted of hammers, more rope and fish.

The stench of the haddock floated through the air. "Oh, lovely, Hiccup," Astrid said monotonely. Her hand made it to her nose and she restricted the amount of smell that the fish was releasing.

"What? It's fresh," Hiccup told her in a knowing voice. She rolled her eyes to herself as he tossed aside a hammer to retrieve his flying harness. Astrid straightened up as he did, unfolding the leather outfit that he had made. Yep, she thought to herself, he was definitely doing more than making outfits.

"Well," he said as he patted the harness, "do you and Fish want to chose out your dragons?"

Astrid turned back to the dragons and teens to see that Fishlegs had dropped the rope and was currently cooing baby talk to the rusty green colored Gronckle.

"Well," she said, "I don't have much of a choice." She turned back to see Hiccup shrugging off his fur vest.

He smiled at her while he started to fuss with the various ties and buckles integrated into his leather harness. "Well, I think the Nadder would be good for you."

Astrid was a little surprised at his statement and she asked, "You do?"

"Well, yeah. I mean," he threw his hands around and then resumed to working on the ties, "it's pretty, and cool and stuff, like you."

Astrid let out a little well-meaning chuckle when he instantly blushed at his statement. She reached out and patted him on the back, "Okay then." He blushed once more, causing the freckles on his face to stand out even more than usual. She smiled and trotted to the dragons.

Slowing down the closer she got, she carefully searched out the Deadly Nadder. She spotted it near the edge of the group, licking its horn absently. Its wild blue color was of that that Astrid found intoxicating to look at. She could faintly make out the venomous spikes on its back, adding to the allure that dragons are dangerous. She gulped slightly to retain her anxious nerve, and carefully approached it.

At the sound of someone drawing near, the Nadder turned its head abruptly to see. Astrid gasped, but instantly calmed herself down. She heedfully held out her right hand, trying to show no panic to set it off. The Nadder's eye narrowed at the gesture, and slowly lowered its head to the level of her hand. Astrid could feel the warm and steady breath coming from its nose as it cautiously inhaled the air surrounding her hand. It cocked its head to the side to get a look of her at a different angle, its beady eyes softening slightly.

She let out a little, soft reassuring laugh as the Nadder started to lick her hand, tickling her fingers and wetting her knuckles with spit.

She was so enthralled with it that she barely turned her head when Hiccup came behind and said softly, "I think she likes you."

Astrid couldn't help but let out a little happy squeal as she squeaked, "It's a girl!"

"Yep," Hiccup replied nonchalantly. He held up a loop of rope and turned to the Nadder, who's eyes widened at the sight of the rough braided yarn, "Hey, it's okay. It won't hurt." He crossed to the Nadder's side and clambered up to her back, avoiding the sharp spikes. Turning to the back of the beast, he laid the rope out around the back and let some drape around her sides. He straightened and called out to Astrid, "Catch!" Hiccup threw her an end of rope, which she caught and looped under her stomach and loosely tied it. Knotting it tightly, she smiled and gave him a thumb's up. He smiled and held out his hand.

Astrid nodded and reached for it, gripping his wrist tightly as he helped her up. Her legs used the spikes as steps as she climbed up the Nadder's sides. Settling down between the spikes, she shifted around to get comfortable. Once comfy, she carefully slid her hands between Hiccup's arms and they met around his waist. She couldn't see his face, but she could tell he was somewhat happy at her gesture when she saw his ears perk up.

"Well?" Astrid laughed. She could hear him gently scoff and reply, "Yeah." Astrid spied the other four teens nodding excitedly, sitting on top of their dragons. A flutter of excitement grew in her stomach when Hiccup yelled, "Okay. Just let the dragon take control, and you gently steer. Alright," his voice wavered with excitement as he gently drew back the rope and yelled, "LET'S GO!"

Astrid squeezed her hands tighter as Hiccup tightened the reins expertly as the Nadder jumped and started to wave its wings around. The other teens immediately followed suit without a problem.

Once they were all out of the vicinity of the ring, the dragons' wings caught wind and they started to pick up speed. Astrid screamed excitedly as the Nadder, under Hiccup's skillful guiding, swooped down to the ocean. She gently let out an arm and caught some of the salty liquid and let it run out of her fingers. Hiccup turned to her with a weak smile and said, "Watch out, we're going up to stay above the fog." Astrid could barely get out a word before Hiccup pulled on the rope and led the Nadder up into the air.

Popping up out of the fog, Astrid saw the other teens quite dexterously guiding their dragons out of the mist and into the clear sky. Astrid, with one arm still wrapped around Hiccup snugly, used one hand to brush out the bangs that covered her eyes.

She watched as Hiccup leaned down to the Nadder's ear and whispered a few words. She could have sworn that she saw the Nadder nod in agreement. The teen straightened up and said quietly and yet so more determined than Astrid have ever seen the clumsy boy, "Take us to the nest."

****OH MY GOSH, I SAW THE GIFT OF THE NIGHT FURY AND I SERIOUSLY COULD HAVE DIED. THE END MADE ME CRY BECAUSE NOT ONLY AM I AN EMOTIONAL PERSON WHEN IT COMES TO MY MOVIES, BUT IT WAS TOO PRECIOUS. I LOVED**

EVERY SINGLE MINUTE OF IT, AFTER REVIEWING THIS, GO WATCH IT, YOU
WILL NEVER REGRET IT!**

End
file.